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Civil Rights and Human Dignity

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April 30, 1998

Senator Tom Daschle
SH-509 Hart Senate Office Bldg.
Washington, D.C. 20510-4103

Dear Sen. Daschle:

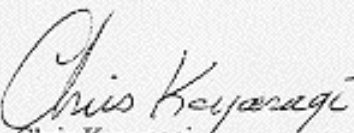
I am writing on behalf of the Bazelon Center for Mental Health Law to express our support of S. 1890, the "Patients' Bill of Rights Act," and to commend you for your leadership in this important area.

The Bazelon Center for Mental Health Law is the leading national legal-advocacy organization representing people with mental disabilities. Through precedent-setting litigation, in the public-policy arena and by assisting legal advocates across the country, the center works to define and uphold the rights of adults and children who rely on public services and ensure them equal access to health and mental health care, education, housing and employment.

S. 1890 is an important bill because it includes many rights that patients need to be guaranteed when they engage the health care system. Several of these rights are particularly vital to individuals with mental disabilities. We are pleased to see provisions for access to specialists, ombudsmen and needed prescription drugs, as well as guarantees of continuity of care and nondiscrimination in the delivery of health services. While we hope to continue working with you and your staff to deal in more depth with some consumer protection issues, we are pleased to endorse S. 1890 at this time.

The Bazelon Center appreciates your diligent work in managed care legislation and thanks you for providing the "Patients' Bill of Rights Act" as a means to ensure that all patients will have the basic health care rights that they need and deserve.

Sincerely,


Chris Koyanagi
Director of Legislative Policy

